

SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT FACT SHEET

Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services

This fact sheet contains information about the impact of alcohol and other drug use in the City of Boston. Admission data were reported to the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS) Substance Abuse Management Information System in FY 2004.

Residents of the City of Boston¹

Characteristics of Admissions

In FY 2004, there were 102,226 admissions to licensed substance abuse treatment services in all of Massachusetts; 17.4% (17,749) of these admissions reside in the City of Boston. 1% (121) of admissions from the City of Boston were under 18 years of age.

Please note that these statistics represent only admissions, and can represent a figure larger than the actual number of individuals. In FY 2004, admissions to all residential and outpatient substance abuse treatment services from the City of Boston reported the following characteristics:

- 74% were male and 26% were female.
- 62% were between the ages of 30-49.
- 51% were white non-Latino, 28% were black non-Latino, 18% were Latino, and 3% were other racial categories.
- 74% were never married, 8% were married, and 18% reported not to be married now.
- 32% had less than high school education, 48% completed high school, and 19% had more than high school education.
- 12% were employed.
- 40% were homeless.
- 21% had prior mental health treatment.

Primary Substance of Use

At admission clients identify a “primary drug” of use which is the substance currently causing them the most problems. Table 1 compares the proportional distribution of primary drugs in Massachusetts with that for the City of Boston.

Table 1					
Primary Drug by District and State FY 2004					
	Alcohol	Heroin	Marijuana	Cocaine	Crack
City	36%	48%	4%	3%	4%
State	43%	39%	5%	4%	2%

Substances Used in Past Year

Upon entering treatment, each client is asked to report ALL substances used in the past year (12 months) prior to admission. Admissions frequently report using more than one substance within the year. The use of more than one psychoactive substance, such as alcohol and marijuana, is referred to as ‘polydrug’ or ‘polysubstance’ use.

¹ Boston includes Allston-Brighton, Charlestown, Dorchester, East Boston, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, Roslindale, Roxbury, South Boston and West Roxbury.

Table 2 shows ALL substances which clients reported using in the year prior to admission, as well as the prevalence of injection drug users (IDU's), individuals who use a needle to ingest cocaine, crack, heroin or another drug to get high.

Table 2. Number of admissions Reporting Substance Used: FY 1996 – FY 2004							
City of Boston							
	Total	Alcohol	Marijuana	Cocaine	Crack	Heroin	IDU
FY '96	21,549	16,073	5,645	8,311	6,236	7,338	4,351
FY '97	22,843	17,443	5,615	7,761	6,389	7,523	4,774
FY '98	22,928	16,888	5,429	6,981	5,272	8,542	5,512
FY '99	22,094	16,309	5,036	6,825	5,007	8,588	5,426
FY '00	21,863	15,920	4,781	6,281	4,445	8,743	5,529
FY '01	22,926	16,035	4,983	6,140	4,107	10,166	5,964
FY '02	23,139	15,346	4,545	6,051	4,053	11,227	7,362
FY '03	21,831	13,987	4,199	5,861	3,755	11,222	8,198
FY '04	17,749	10,918	3,250	4,467	3,132	9,263	6,810

Heroin and Injection Drug Use

Figure 1 below shows the proportional increases in all admissions in the City of Boston and the proportional increase in admissions reporting heroin and injection drug use, a factor driving increases in HIV.

